Why is it that whenever I'm at the gym cycling to nowhere Food Network Cooks are showing off their talent? The Barefoot Contessa is chopping and smiling, Paula Deen is adding butter, and the Neelys of Nashville are laughing together in the kitchen. We are drawn to experts making an everyday task look easy.

It all started with Cambridge's beloved Julia Child. Julia gave us more than recipes. She showed us how to cook, gave advice and offered forgiveness to those who goofed. "In cooking you've got to have a 'What- the- Hell' attitude." You'll find Julia's books in the library as well as dvds from her very first TV cooking show, *The French Chef.* Don't miss *My Life in France*, Julia's wonderful autobiography about falling in love with French food and cooking.

Watching great cooks prepare great food is entertaining. But once all the patter is over, it's nice to see the recipes. And unlike recipes on the internet, cookbooks offer us the back story. Here are a just a few cook's books that you'll find at the library:

## Down Home with the Neelys: a Southern Family Cookbook

Patrick and Gina Neely were high school sweethearts who married and went into the Neely Family Business together. Their recipes for seasonings, sauces and southern style dishes are time tested at their restaurants in Memphis and Nashville.

Paula Deen is the queen of butter but in <u>The Deen Family Cookbook</u>, she has included a chapter on 'Good Food That's Good for You'. Curried Zucchini Apple Soup is a specialty I wouldn't have expected from her.

Formerly the king of "BAM!", Fall River native Emeril Lagasse is going green. His latest book, <u>Farm to Fork:</u> <u>Cooking Local, Cooking Fresh</u> includes a salad of two easy to find ingredients: watermelon and arugula.

Fast cook Rachael Ray is known for short prep time. Her book, <u>2</u>, <u>4</u>, <u>6</u>, <u>8 Great Meals for Couples or Crowds</u> provides game plans ("Get the rice going before you start on the chicken") for the hurried chef.

England's Gordon Ramsay's TV shows are about managing restaurant kitchens. Before becoming a restaurateur he was a chef. *Cooking for Friends* promises a style that is relaxed, very unlike Ramsay in his hit, "Hell's Kitchen".

Although he promises perfectly grilled chicken breasts, <u>Bobby Flay's Grill It!</u> isn't only about meat. Non-carnivores will appreciate the how to's of preparing Cuban-style corn. For dessert, try grilled apricots with yogurt, honey, and walnuts!

Although she grew up in N.Y. State, Mary Ann Esposito's grandmothers were both native Italian. <u>Ciao Italia Five</u> <u>Ingredient Favorites</u> promises easy meals and classics with a twist such as Linguine with Walnut Sauce.

<u>Barefoot Contessa: How Easy is That?</u> includes simple instructions for Italian specialties such as Parmesan Polenta and Roasted Vegetable Frittata from best selling cookbook author Ina Garten.

Relative newcomer, Gina De Laurentiis, is the granddaughter of movie producer Dino De Laurentiis. After attending Paris' prestigious Cordon Bleu she worked for famous chef Wolfgang Puck. In <u>Giada's Family Dinners</u>, she includes pasta recipes that can be served as the first course Italian style or for most of us as the main course.

No matter what your cooking style, we would all do well to follow Julia's advice:

"Have Fun and Bon Appetit!"